



# Long Island Field Office

<http://nyfo.fws.gov>

## Federal Activities



**Long Island Field Office**  
**U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service**  
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*"We abuse the land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect."*

**Aldo Leopold**

The Endangered Species Act (ESA) has broader mandates than simply directing the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to protect listed plants or animals. It directs **all** Federal agencies to participate in endangered species conservation. Specifically, Section 7 of the ESA charges Federal agencies to aid in the conservation of listed species and requires Federal agencies to ensure that their activities will not jeopardize the continued existence of listed species. On Long Island, the Federal agencies, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) and the National Park Service (NPS), consult with the Service's Long Island Field Office (LIFO) on all the activities that they fund, construct, or authorize which may affect one of Long Island's four Federally-listed species.

In addition, the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (FWCA) provides the basic authority for the Service's involvement in evaluating impacts to fish and wildlife from proposed water resource development projects.

### ***Why are Wetlands Valuable?***

Wetlands provide important feeding, breeding, and resting habitat for a variety of fish and wildlife. They can soak up and retain rainfall, thereby reducing flooding of adjacent and downstream upland areas. Wetland plants and sediments can also filter out nutrients, sediment, organic matter, and contaminants, preventing or slowing their release into streams, lakes, and groundwater. Wetlands also provide beautiful places for people to hunt, fish, hike, and just enjoy natural resources.

recommendations on measures to avoid, minimize, rectify, reduce, and/or compensate for fish and wildlife resource impacts of proposed actions. The Corps coordinates with the Service on all proposed construction projects such as for flood control, shoreline stabilization, or navigation. Our role is to ensure that construction is planned with a view toward conservation of fish and wildlife and/or minimization of harmful affects to threatened and endangered species.

The LIFO reviews permits proposed for authorization by the Corps under Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act and Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. The LIFO also reviews proposed development activities such as residential and commercial structures that involve encroachment on wetlands, rivers, or streams and the construction of structures such as piers and bulkheads in navigable waters, dredging, and beach fill. The Service provides



### **Recent LIFO Federal Consultations and Regulatory Activities**

The LIFO has contracted with the Corps' Operations Division to undertake surveys and monitoring of populations of threatened and endangered species within the Corps' Fire Island Inlet Navigation and Shores Westerly Beach Nourishment Project. The project area extends approximately 5 miles, from Fire Island

Inlet to Gilgo Beach, New York, and provides habitat for Federally and State-listed species such as piping plover, least tern, American oystercatcher, and seabeach amaranth.

The Service has partnered with the Citizens Environmental Research Institute to monitor for threatened and endangered species activities in the project area and to implement protection measures in consultation with local landowners. This joint effort by the Corps and the Service has been instrumental in assisting the local public landowners in managing for threatened and endangered species on their parklands.

Fire Island Inlet to Montauk Point Beach Erosion Control and Hurricane Protection Project (FIMP): The LIFO is actively engaged in the development of the FIMP, providing technical assistance on the development of environmental studies. This project spans 83 miles along the south shore of Long Island and includes habitat for many threatened and endangered species, waterfowl, shorebirds, and plants species. Sensitive habitats, which fall within the project area, include submerged aquatic vegetation, saltwater wetlands, freshwater wetlands, and early successional beach habitats. Currently, we are working with the Corps and others to evaluate and identify habitats for restoration. The Service has recommended a number of studies to the Corps which should be undertaken to establish a baseline assessment of species in the project area including surveys for shorebirds and waterfowl, back-bay finfish, and shellfish.



Under the FWCA, the LIFO is evaluating impacts to fish and wildlife resources from several major water development projects by the Corps and drafts recommendations in the FWCA Report that will minimize, reduce, avoid, or compensate for impacts from such projects. These projects include: Mattituck Inlet, Montauk Point, Lake Montauk, Northport, Asharoken, Jones Inlet to East Rockaway Inlet (Long Beach), Jamaica Bay, East Rockaway Inlet to Rockaway Inlet (Rockaway Beach), Spring Creek, Gerritsen Creek, and Arverne (Jamaica Bay, Marine Park, and Plum Beach). For more information on these projects see <http://www.nan.usace.army.mil/project/newyork/>.

Every year, the LIFO reviews approximately over 250 public notices prepared by the Corps and the U.S. Coast Guard. In these public notices, applicants, or the Corps itself, propose to impact wetlands, streams, navigation channels, and other bodies of water. The Service provides recommendations that are effective at reducing the impact of these projects on fish and wildlife resources and ensuring that migration is provided to achieve or enhance fish and wildlife benefits. Since January 2004, we have provided comments related to the enhancement of existing habitat at the site, minimization of impacts through reductions and modifications of project plans, and project denials on 44 percent of the permit applications reviewed, while we had no objection or no action comments to the 66 percent of the remaining applications.

#### **Some Useful Websites:**

<http://nyfo.fws.gov>

<http://wetlands.fws.gov>

<http://www.nan.usace.army.mil>